

Sister Mable was born on January 25, 1931 in Picayune, Mississippi. She lived there until the age of 13, when she and her family moved to Alameda, California. She attended Alameda High School and Merritt Business School.

In 1953, Sister Mable married Thomas Williams, and in 1955 they moved to Oakland, California. Mable and her family have lived in Brookfield Village in East Oakland since that time, providing spiritual support to family, friends and neighbors. She also served as an employee of the United States Post Office for over 30 outstanding years, retiring in 1989.

Sister Mable joined Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in 1944 and immediately committed herself to serving in many aspects. For example, she served as a Charter Member of the church, and also as a secretary for the pastor, Reverend Herbert Guice. Furthermore, she served as a Charter Member of the Bethel Bible Class, and as a Sunday School Teacher of the Young Adult class.

One of Sister Mable's most outstanding accomplishments is having served as the Director of the Junior Church of the Bethel Missionary Baptist Church for 50 years. Under her leadership, countless young people have had opportunities to serve and to brighten their communities. Her dedication has earned her the nickname "Able Mable," because she is never too busy or too tired to give of herself.

On Sunday, December 31, 2006, the friends, family and colleagues of Sister Mable Williams will come together to celebrate her tireless work and commitment to our community. On this very special day, I join all of them in thanking and saluting Sister Mable for her invaluable service, and for the profoundly positive impact her work has had on countless lives here in California's 9th U.S. Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL
RICHARD A PLATT

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor a respected military officer and great fighter pilot upon the occasion of his retirement from the United States Air Force and Air National Guard after 36 years of honorable and dedicated service.

Born in Silver Creek, New York, growing up in Suffern, New York, Major General Richard A. Platt began his military career June 1971 when he received his commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Newark College of Engineering. After earning his pilot wings in June 1972, he flew F-4 Phantom fighter aircraft and was assigned to front line combat units in Southeast Asia, Europe and the United States.

Madam Speaker, from his early days as a fighter pilot in Vietnam to his role as a fighter weapons instructor General Platt has shown impressive leadership and combat flying skills. His flying experience includes two combat tours of duty, one in Vietnam and the other over the skies of Bosnia.

In 1981, Major General Platt left the active duty air force and continued his service flying the A-10 Warthog as a member of the 104th

Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard. General Platt time and time again demonstrated his unparalleled vision and leadership. As a commander, he led the transformation of the 104th Fighter Wing into one of the premier fighting units in the entire American military.

Madam Speaker, following his flying career, General Platt served with distinction as he continued to provide vision and leadership to the Air National Guard. His assignments included commander of the Massachusetts Air National Guard and Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander of both Air Combat Command as well as United States Air Forces Europe. His last post brought him to Washington, D.C. where he was Assistant to the Director of the Air National Guard. In this role, General Platt was instrumental in beginning important changes to ensure the relevance and viability of the Air National Guard and United States Air Force, in this most challenging period of our country's history.

Madam Speaker, General Platt's dedication to the military has been evident from the day he joined his ROTC unit to his last tour of duty at the Pentagon; but perhaps more than any other assignment, nothing was more special to him than his role as commander of the 104th Fighter Wing. Even today, several years after General Platt's tenure, the wing is still recognized as an elite unit—his core values of integrity, dedication to duty, and patriotism remain strong. General Platt recognized that the fighter wing and our entire military are only as strong as the lowest ranking member—and no one member was more important than any other. For him the 104th Fighter Wing was more than just officers and airmen, they were, and still remain his family.

Madam Speaker, each and every American is safer and freer due to the service of Major General Platt and the men and women like him serving across all of our armed services.

Madam Speaker, in recognition of and in gratitude for his service, leadership and patriotism, I ask that this honorable body join me in honoring Major General Richard A. Platt upon the occasion of his retirement; and wish him great health and happiness in the days and years ahead as a father, husband and grandfather.

THE 110TH CONGRESS

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, yesterday, January 4, 2007, marked a historic day for progress in the United States of America for two reasons. The House of Representatives grew by taking further steps to represent the full fabric of the American People. The American people have selected their first woman speaker, Nancy Pelosi, and their first Muslim member of Congress, Keith Ellison. I am proud that Americans have rejected the statements from some who alleged Americans of all faiths are not welcome in Congress. This is also the first time the American people are represented by a speaker with a clear goal to move the United States towards energy independence. These advances represent steps forward in America's continuing experiment in

democracy in which Congress represents America's stripes.

INTRODUCTION OF THE JOURNEY
THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ACT

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to create The Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area. Senator WARNER will be introducing companion legislation in the Senate.

We remember the words of Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address:

We cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have hallowed it far above our poor power to add or detract.

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground winds its way along U.S. Route 15 from Jefferson's home of Monticello, in Charlottesville, Virginia to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Starting as a trail used by the Susquehannock and Iroquois, America's early history can literally be traced along this corridor. Jefferson's Monticello, Madison's Montpelier, Monroe's Oak Hill and Ashlawn Highland, Zachary Taylor's homes, Eisenhower's cottage, Teddy Roosevelt's cabin, John Marshall's home, General George Marshall's home, and Camp David are situated along this route also dotted with numerous Civil War battlefields and sites from the underground railroad.

Designation of this historic route as a National Heritage Area will create a partnership between the federal, state, and local governments as well as local civic organizations to commemorate, conserve and promote the history and resources along the Route 15 corridor between Gettysburg and Monticello. It will help link national parks to historical sites, package tourism opportunities, and provide financial and technical support for sites in the corridor.

This historic corridor includes a significant part of the 10th District of Virginia, which I am proud to represent. I echo the sentiments of author and historian David McCullough when he said that "[t]his is the ground of our Founding Fathers. These are the landscapes that speak volumes—small towns, churches, fields, mountains, creeks and rivers with names such as Bull Run and Rappahannock. They are the real thing, and what shame we will bring upon ourselves if we destroy them."

This bill is modeled after the legislation Senator WARNER and I introduced which created the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District in the Shenandoah Valley in 1996. Through that legislation, the Civil War battlefield sites in the Valley are being preserved. As with that bill, local, state and federal officials, working along with landowners and business leaders will be able to better promote the history of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground attracting tourism and an appreciation for the unique history of this area.

I would like to thank the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership which has been working to forge partnerships that span the four states that fall within the proposed boundaries of the heritage area. This group has laid

the groundwork in identifying the significant historical properties within such a concentrated area along U.S. Route 15. Dozens of towns and counties along the corridor have offered letters of support as have local civic groups. The Virginia General Assembly also has approved a resolution of support.

This legislation has been painstakingly drafted to ensure that the rights of private property owners within the district will not be usurped. In fact, designation as a heritage area increases the rights of property owners giving them an opportunity to learn more about the significance of their own property and allowing them to market their property as historically significant. Landowners should have the right to choose preservation and protection along with the right to choose to build town homes, malls and highways.

The legislation clearly states: "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to modify the authority of Federal, State, or local governments to regulate land use." Additionally, the only new federal funds accessible to The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership will be for the management of the heritage area.

The bill also specifically prohibits the use of eminent domain and the ability of the management entity to regulate land use. The Government Accountability Office, the nonpartisan research service for the legislative branch, has investigated the effect of a heritage area designation on land use decisions. Its 2004 report states: "Heritage area officials, Park Service headquarters and regional staff, and representatives of national property rights groups that we contacted were unable to provide us with any examples of a heritage area directly affecting—positively or negatively—private property values or use."

This legislation is a local effort to recognize the history and beauty of this region. The organizers are local landowners who have the vision to appreciate that they live among the nation's most precious resources and history. The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership conducted a poll of the residents in the heritage area and found that 81 percent of those polled expressed support for the initiative.

To understand the importance of this initiative, I refer to the words of Thomas Jefferson in his Notes on the State of Virginia:

You stand on a very high point of land. On your right comes up the Shenandoah, having ranged along the foot of the mountain a hundred miles to seek a vent. On your left approaches the Potomac, in quest of a passage also. In the moment of their junction, they rush together against the mountain, rend it asunder, and pass off to the sea. The first glance of this scene hurries our senses into the opinion that this earth has been created in time, that the mountains were formed first, that the rivers began to flow afterwards, that in this place, particularly, they have been dammed up by the Blue Ridge of mountains, and have formed an ocean which filed the whole valley; that continuing to rise they have at length broken over this spot, and have torn the mountains down from its summit to its base. The piles of rocks on each hand, but particularly on the Shenandoah, the evident marks of their disrapture and avulsion from their beds by the most powerful agents of nature, corroborate the impression. But the distant finishing, which nature has given to the picture, is of a very different character. It is a true contrast to the foreground. It is as placid and delightful as that is wild and tremen-

dous. For the mountain being cloven asunder, she presents to your eye, through the cleft, a small catch of smooth, blue horizon, at an infinite distance in the plain country, inviting you, as it were, from the riot and tumult roaring around, to pass through the breach and participate in the calm below.

The landscape Jefferson depicts has been inspirational to American leaders for hundreds of years. From Susquehannock Indian trading routes and to Revolutionary War battles; from the homes of the founding fathers to the first brave pioneers to make a home beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains; from the Civil War battles which threatened to divide the union to the underground railroad, our nation was forged along this route. From Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and the fertile Piedmont to the east of the corridor the route in many ways exhibits the birth and development of our nation's economy, social movements and political landscape. Perhaps even more significant than the battlefields that cluster along the route are the documents penned in the homes along the corridor. The Declaration of Independence, the Monroe Doctrine and the Marshall Plan have influenced not only this nation, but the entire world.

Every American citizen should take a trip along this route so that they know not only from where our nation has come, but also to where we are going. We cannot stand as a nation unless we know what this nation stands for.

As we come upon the 400th anniversary this year of America's birthplace at Jamestown, I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting this legislation.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT OF 2007

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 5, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, the 9/11 Commission produced an unprecedented, bipartisan evaluation of how terrorists were able to exploit our nation's security on September 11, 2001. The Commissioners made 41 valuable recommendations on how to prevent such an attack from occurring again. Unfortunately, not all of those recommendations were fulfilled by Congress and the Bush Administration. As a result, the American people remain at-risk, and our nation remains unprepared for a major emergency. When Hurricanes Katrina and Rita slammed into the Gulf Coast, we were reminded again of how unprepared we still are to deal with national disasters—whether caused by nature or a terrorist attack.

The "Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007," which I am introducing today, will make the United States more secure by closing many of the security gaps that continue to expose our nation to the risk of a terrorist attack.

Enactment of this legislation will make it more difficult for terrorists to obtain nuclear materials, ensure that first responders finally have the equipment they need to respond to a disaster, airplanes will be more secure, our borders will be harder for terrorists to penetrate, our police and other local law enforce-

ment will finally get the information they need about terrorist threats, and ports and other critical infrastructure will be made more secure. Perhaps most importantly, this bill makes these improvements in security without endangering our American way of life because it puts in place strong new privacy and civil liberties protections.

Specifically, this bill provides much-needed support to the first responders at the State, local, and tribal levels who bear the brunt of the emergency response and preparedness burden. The 9-11 Commission recommended that homeland security funds designed to improve emergency preparedness be allocated based on risk, and that steps be taken to provide first responders with communications systems that are fully interoperable in an emergency. This bill fulfills these recommendations by providing for risk-based evaluation and prioritization of homeland security grants and enhanced accountability for grant distribution and use, so that federal aid will go where it is most needed. Moreover, it creates a stand-alone grant program to help States, local and tribal governments erect the interoperable communications systems that are so vital to effective emergency response. It also encourages the use of a unified command during an emergency, so that Federal officials work more closely with State, local, and tribal governments in preparation and response efforts.

The 9/11 Commission found that many Federal agencies had information that could have led to the arrest and capture of the September 11th hijackers, but that this information did not reach the Federal, State, and local officials who could have acted on it. This bill acts on the 9/11 Commission's recommendation to improve intelligence and information sharing between Federal authorities and their State and local counterparts. First, it establishes the Fusion and Law Enforcement Education and Training (FLEET) Grant Program to strengthen the capabilities of local fusion centers and to foster cooperation among State and local law enforcement officers. It also establishes the Border Intelligence Fusion Center Program, which will put experienced Federal border security personnel to fusion centers in border States to enhance collaboration. Additionally, it provides more State and local law enforcement officers with the opportunity to gain valuable experience working in Washington with Department of Homeland Security officials. Finally, it ensures the Department itself has the technology and organization needed to facilitate intelligence and information sharing.

Our nation's aviation system, which was easily exploited by the September 11th hijackers, will also be made more secure through this bill. The 9/11 Commission found that more steps need to be taken to secure air cargo and checked baggage and to ensure airport checkpoints have the equipment necessary to detect explosives. This bill meets those concerns. First, it requires TSA to develop a system so that 100 percent of air cargo carried on passenger aircraft is inspected by 2009. Second, it provides for an additional billion dollars to be made available over the next four years to put modern baggage screening systems in place. It also creates an innovative new \$250 million trust fund to address the risk of suicide bombers at the checkpoint by strengthening explosive detection at the checkpoint. The Department will also have to explain how it plans to undertake efforts to prescreen passenger